

Tough Times

Vol. 6 No. 3/May-June, 2017

HELP FOR THE HUNGRY Soup kitchen for Mississauga

Asoup kitchen is coming to Mississauga.

Its purpose: To ensure that homeless and needy adults and children can get three meals a day every day of the year.

As of now, Mississauga's hungry eat at venues that serve meals a few days a week, or occasional meals provided by local faith groups. Many schools have breakfast programs, and food banks (which provide the goodies but not the cooking) are spread across the city. Some famished folk travel to Knights Table in Brampton for a hot meal.

And that is the key.

Knights Table Brampton is open every day of the year.

Although Mississauga provides food for the hungry, it is not all day and not every day.

That will change.

A group of poverty activists met

in April at the invitation of Dipika Damerla, MPP for Mississauga East-Cooksville and Minister of Seniors Affairs, to talk about hunger and homelessness in Canada's sixth largest city.

They agreed that a community kitchen is needed in Mississauga, that Knights Table, which has operated its soup kitchen in Brampton for 26 years, has the know-how and the skills to make it happen.

They talked about where in Mississauga hungry people congregate, how a soup kitchen (officially to be called a community kitchen) must be on a bus route; how to organize local support by involving ward councillors, MPs and MPPs, faith groups, social services, business organizations and the public.

They learned that though hot meals are the main ingredient in helping the homeless, many other services are pro-



A sign soon to come to Mississauga – if you are hungry and strapped for cash, drop in for a free meal. (*Tough Times* photo)

vided at the Brampton venue – services intended to help people get jobs, overcome addictions, stay close to their children (5,400 of Knights Table's 13,500 diners a year are children), after-school care which can include help with homework, building computer skills, activities for seniors, leadership training.

Services like this are offered by many organizations all over Peel – but seldom with a hot meal incentive.

Knights Table does its job with a small staff -- and 2,500 volunteers.

Want to become a founding mem-

ber of Mississauga's Knights Table?

Phone the Brampton Knights at 905 454-8725, or email administrator@knightstable.org

Give your name, address, phone, email, and what you want to do to help – at this stage make people aware of the need for a soup kitchen in Mississauga, lobby your councillor, MP or MPP. Fund-raising will come later, and eventually opportunities to volunteer at the new Knights, wherever it is.

See "Community Kitchen...", page 9

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

On behalf of the many Muslims in Peel Region, I want to thank everyone who is speaking up against stigmatizing the Muslim community.

The last few months have been frightening for

Muslims here and we are grateful for the outspoken support of Peel District School Board, and its officers Janet McDougald, Tony Ponte and Brian Woodland. Mayors Linda Jeffrey of Brampton and Bonnie Crombie of Mississauga also denounced racism, and Ruby Sahota, MP for Brampton North, courageously faced down a demand that she oppose the Muslim community. Bob Punia from DnB Media and

Balpreet Singh from the World Sikh Organization took a strong and public stance against hate.

As a Muslim, I know that many people of other faiths are horrified at the vilification of Peel's Muslims, or of any other group in our Region.

All of us want to live in peace and safety.

Shaila Kibria-Carter
Islamic Relief Canada

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PEEL POVERTY ACTION GROUP

Peel Poverty Action Group (PPAG) is open to every individual and organization in Peel Region that cares about what poverty does to people. It provides a safe place where people who are cash-poor and those who try to help them are encouraged to speak out – and *Tough Times* is part of that safe place.

The Group's mandate is to advocate for people in need and to educate the public about poverty issues. Membership is free. PPAG meets at 9:30 a.m. the second Thursday of every month (except July and August) alternately in Mississauga at the Newcomer Centre of Peel, 165 Dundas St. W., at Confederation Parkway; in Brampton at the John Howard Society, 134 Main St. N., just south of Church St.

Meetings for 2017

Brampton: May 11, September 14, November 9;
Mississauga: June 8, October 12, December, date to be decided.

www.ppag.wordpress.com

Homeless: The Video

Spaces and Places: Uncovering Homelessness in the Region of Peel is a 15-minute video in which homeless people describe their experiences. A team from PPAG, including a once-homeless person, will show the video to a group on request. There is no charge. To book a showing contact ppagactiongroup@gmail.com. Allow about 45 minutes for the video and discussion.

The video was made by a team from York University, in cooperation with the Social Planning Council of Peel, financed by a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

You can buy *Spaces and Places* on a memory stick for \$50. Email ppagactiongroup@gmail.com or phone 905 826-5041.

Thank YOU for the phone call, buddy

Tough Times' phone rang. Missed the name of the caller. He was very nice. He said he had been homeless at one time and though he was doing better now, he appreciated attempts to help.

"Thank you for standing up for us," he said.

He was talking about the March-April edition of *Tough Times*, which carried a report *You can't exit poverty on OW or ODSP*, which is what Peel Poverty Action Group (PPAG) told Charles Sousa, Ontario's Finance Minister and MPP for Mississauga South.

Sousa wanted to know what people thought about the Ontario Budget, what should be in it and what left out.

So PPAG told him: the provincial government should increase the cash amounts paid to people who must rely on Ontario Works (OW) or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) for an income. PPAG said the allowances are not enough to live on.

At press time, the Ontario Budget was still a work in progress.

PPAG also asked Sousa to see that help was provided to those who support elderly family members, usually parents suffering from Alzheimer's or similar. PPAG knows of cases where caregivers are close to destitute before they get government help.

Other organizations are at work on this issue, notably CARP, the Canadian Association of Retired Persons.

CARP comments:

"The economic benefits of having caregivers are huge. The estimated savings for governments at all levels exceeds \$20 billion annually, but there is a human toll. Caregivers endure significant costs to their own health. Caregivers report high levels of stress and burn-out as a result of caring for a loved one."

"Unfortunately, Canada does a

poor job of caring for our caregivers. As a nation we lag well behind other developed countries when it comes to supporting them and providing home-based care to loved ones."

The federal government is expanding Employment Insurance Compassionate Care benefits to include critically ill family members. Previously, only those caring for terminally ill family members were eligible. Also, the Canada Caregiver Tax Credit now benefits more caregivers.

Let's hope Ontario cares for the caregivers, too.

Caregivers save taxpayers more than \$20 billion a year, but there is a human toll.

Words from Randy:
Tough Times' friend Randy has had an interesting life, which continues, as he tells us:

My to do list grows every day like a tree with branches and leaves.

It's important to me to do what I say I'm going to do. Finding the time is the trick. Living life is very time consuming.

I have more than 26,000 photos from 2016. I was busy or I would have taken far more. When I got a new chip for my camera I discovered that I had taken 996 photos in three days and it was only late afternoon of the third day. In August, during a train trip from Brampton to Union Station, I took around 400 shots.

In August I told my contact at the photo printer that my life was moving at the speed of light – I must have blinked because now it's January.

I'm 18 months clean and sober as of January 16th, but that's almost insignificant compared to what has been going on in my life.

I've got innumerable stories for you. Every day is an adventure. Someday I'll tell you about the coyotes, raccoons, deer, mice, geese, foxes, skunks etc. and then there's the suburban wildlife – crack-heads and trannies, cops and crooks.

So many stories, so little time.

ToughTimes

Tough Times is published six times a year

Next issue: July-August, 2017
Deadline for ads and editorial: Thursday, June 1, 2017

All deadlines are the first day of the preceding month:
 Sept.-Oct. deadline: August 1;
 Nov.-Dec. deadline: October 1
 Jan.-Feb 2018 deadline: December 1.

Phone 905 826-5041

Volunteer writers, reporters, artists, cartoonists, photographers, are welcome at *Tough Times*.

Please email letters to: toughtimestabloid@gmail.com

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Printed by: Atlantic Web Printers

Advertising Rates

Tough Times distributes 10,000 copies, throughout Peel Region.

Target audience is people experiencing homelessness, using food banks and soup kitchens, people who are struggling, plus faith groups, social service agencies, trades unions, business people, and the general public.

To advertise in Tough Times:

toughtimestabloid@gmail.com

Phone: 905 826-5041

Mail address: 4 - 287 Glidden Road
 Brampton ON L6W 1H9, Canada

Advertising rates: (colour included)

Business card: \$90

1/16 page: \$100

1/8 page: \$155

1/4 page: \$240

1/2 page: \$430

3/4 page: \$600

Full page: \$755

A full page is approximately 10 inches wide by 12 inches deep = 120 square inches. E&OE

CANADIAN POVERTY STRATEGY

Let's tell the feds what we think

The Canadian government wants to know what you think about poverty.

Canada is rated ninth in the world for education and income, plus we live longer, yet more than three million Canadians live in poverty.

How come? And what can be done about it?

The government wants YOU to come up with the answers.

You can tell the government what to do via an online discussion group, by email, or by attending face-to-face consultations arranged by local Members of Parliament, organizations such as the Region of Peel, and non-profit groups.

To make sure the feds find out about poverty from people who are living with it, Peel Poverty Action Group (PPAG) is organizing a

consultation at 1 p.m. Wednesday, June 21, 2017, at Knights Table, 247 Glidden Road, Brampton, just east off Kennedy Road.

You are invited. Bring your beefs and good ideas. Tell it like it is.

For instance, if you can't buy healthy food, must live in a squalid building, don't have bus fare to go to the doctor or to a job, can't leave an abusive spouse because you can't support yourself and kids, that's poverty.

It can go on for generations.

The government wants you to read a 40-page Consultation Discussion Paper available online.

It provides info on how poverty is defined: Low Income Cut-offs, Low Income Measure and Market Basket Measure and what those expressions

mean. Can we suggest better measures? You may think we should just get on with solving some of poverty's problems without defining it at all.

The Paper lists questions:

What targets should we pick?

On which groups should we focus our efforts?

What federal government programs are reducing poverty?

What are other levels of government doing that reduce poverty? Are community organizations, businesses, academics, finding ways to reduce poverty?

And are we sharing information about what works and what doesn't?

The Region of Peel has already talked to people in Mississauga, Brampton, Caledon, and picked up ideas and nifty quotes.

For instance: You ask where your

"next meal is coming from and the answer is not in the fridge." And "living in with bedbugs while waiting to get a better job." "The only remedy for poverty is prosperity which is self-selected, self-directed, market choice."

To talk now about poverty and how to end it, join an online discussion group at http://esdc-consultations.canada.ca/canadian-poverty-reduction-strategy-discussion?tool=forum-topic#tool_tab

Online surveys can be found at <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/poverty-reduction/consultation-poverty.html>

The Discussion Paper is at <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/poverty-reduction/discussion-paper.html#h2.4>

Smiles on Wheels laughs all the way to the bank

Balbir Sohi with one of the dentistry-equipped vans she uses for Smiles on Wheels, providing dental hygiene treatment across the GTA. Balbir graduated as a dental hygienist from Regency Dental Hygiene School in Toronto in 2008 and worked for a dentist before setting up her own travelling hygiene practice. Her business skills were drilled with the help of the City of Brampton's Entrepreneur Centre. Then she got an appointment on Dragon's Den on TV, extracting a \$240,000 loan to set up franchises for Smiles on Wheels, with the first franchised van expected to chew into new business in the fall. (*Photo supplied*)



NEED FOOD?

غذا در کار بے؟

ਭੇਜਨ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰਤ?

需要食物吗？

Cần thực phẩm?

هل تحتاج إلى الطعام؟

Necesita comida?



Don't Go Hungry

If you don't have enough money for food and live in Mississauga, you can go to a neighbourhood food bank.

It doesn't matter about your age, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, or immigration status. You will receive enough healthy food to feed your family for 7-10 days each month. There is no cost to visit a food bank.

Find your food bank at
www.themississaugafoodbank.org
 or phone 905.270.5589.



HOMING IN

Mississauga – housing for the middle class

The middle class – families with incomes between \$55,000 and \$100,000 – are the main beneficiaries of Mississauga's latest housing strategy.

But there may be something in it for the cash-poor too. Mayor Bonnie Crombie says ‘*Making Room for the Middle*’, title of the new strategy, provides “bold, innovative and practical” ideas leading to affordable housing.

Among the ideas: changes in regulations plus encouragements that could lead to more secondary units -- basement apartments and similar. That's where the people whose incomes are well below the Middle Class level are likely to live.

Most of the recommendations in the Strategy are aimed at developers.

“This Strategy aims to foster a supportive development environment for private and non-profit housing builders to provide a range of housing that is affordable for all - with a focus on middle-income households,” says Mayor Crombie.

“The draft strategy proposes a target of 35% of all new development to be affordable.

“In Mississauga, the supply of housing that is affordable to a variety of household incomes is decreasing. In particular, the range of housing available to middle-income earners is dwindling, such that a large part of the population and workforce is being priced out of Mississauga.

“Many middle-income households in Mississauga are struggling to enter the housing and rental market due to rising prices. One in three households is spending more than 30 per cent of gross household income on housing, which is considered unaffordable.

“At this income level, those that rent may have difficulty finding units that suit their needs.

“With the vacancy rate at half what it should be, prospective renters are finding it increasingly difficult.

Prospective homeowners can afford to pay from \$270,000 to \$400,000 but in Mississauga, this can only buy a condominium apartment or very limited selection of townhouses.

“Unlike low and high income households, middle income households do not qualify for financial assistance from public programs, nor can they qualify for large mortgages.

“The City does not build housing, so the primary aim of the strategy is to help private and non-profit builders to deliver more housing that is the right size and type to suit the needs of all middle-income households.

“Mississauga can bring about change by establishing planning policy and regulations which encourage a range of housing types and sizes; adopting by-laws that regulate and control demolition of affordable buildings; appealing to other levels of government to change policies and programs, and for financial support.

Possibilities: a Property Tax Deferral Program, a Regional tax levy to support middle income households; a “housing first” policy for surplus City lands; simplifying processes for secondary units; creating a reserve fund to finance affordable housing and purpose-built rental housing incentives.

“The draft strategy proposes removing regulatory barriers, such as parking standards and development fees.

“But most importantly, the strategy calls for systems reform at the senior levels of government.

“We need the collective will and commitment of all levels of government to provide the financial and regulatory support that will increase and protect the supply of housing that's affordable for all.

“People cannot pursue the opportunities that each new day brings here in Mississauga, if they do not have a safe place to lay their heads at night. Complete cities move, service and house people.”

Making Room for the Middle is up for public discussion at a Housing Forum in Mississauga in May. (Date not available as *Tough Times* went to press.)

Mississauga's housing strategy includes:

- making surplus lands available for affordable housing;

- making it easier to add a second unit (basement apartment) to your private home, possibly with the help of grants and loans and tax credits;

- preventing demolition of existing rental units except to make way for more rental units;

- prevent conversion of rental units to condominiums-for-purchase;

- reduce development charges on affordable housing units;

- consider a property tax deferral program for new housing for middle-income families;

On the money

Help families get a down payment for a house by encouraging shared equity and co-housing for middle income households;

ask the federal and provincial governments and the Region of Peel

- to establish funding programs that fit developers' needs;
- to provide affordable home ownership assistance to individuals;
- provide incentives to develop rental housing, which could include GST rebates or exemptions, land transfer tax exemptions;

This is all in the idea stage. You can read the entire 35-page draft at:

www7.mississauga.ca/documents/committees/pdc/2017/2017_03_20_PDC_Agenda_Afternoon.pdf

Hepatitis C Treatment, Care & Support Is Available

You can be at risk if:

- Sharing of personal care and hygiene items such as razors, toothbrushes, clippers and scissors with someone living with hepatitis C
- Sharing needles used for body tattoos and piercings. Reusing and sharing tattoo ink and ink pots
- Sharing drug equipment such as needles, filters, tourniquets, water, syringes, cookers, alcohol swabs, acidifiers
- Receive blood and body organs that have not been screened for hepatitis C. Even in Canada, if you received blood and organ donations before 1990 you may be at risk.
- Involved in medical procedures including immunization in hepatitis C endemic countries



Bloom Clinic

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Call today for information or to book a free test.

Pathway to affordable housing in Peel



John Needham

When people need housing, builders come in all shapes and sizes. There are developers who make a profit, municipal governments that build for families who can't afford mortgages or even rent, and there are private citizens who also provide for people not flush with money. Such a private enterprise is Pathway Non-Profit Community Developments Inc., of Mississauga. Here is Pathway's story.

BY JOHN NEEDHAM

The founding of Pathway Non-Profit Community Developments Inc. of Peel (Pathway) began in 1988 when members of FOODPATH (now The Mississauga Food Bank) recognized that those using the foodbank needed affordable housing.

After a few meetings and discussions, three Peel faith groups joined forces: Sole Congregation in Mississauga; Streetsville United Church; and the Unitarian Congregation in Mississauga formed Pathway, with a mission to provide decent and affordable housing that nurtures the community and well-being of people with no, low, or modest income. Pathway is now one of Peel's largest non-profit housing providers.

Partners came forward: Keith Ward of Peel Non Profit Housing Corporation (now Peel Living) became an advisor to the group and Daniels Group made a proposal to build affordable housing on their property located on The Collegeway in Mississauga. Peel Non Profit Housing became a partner in developing the site and funding was obtained from the Ontario Government. The result was completion in 1991 of a large townhouse and high rise devel-

opment including a new 132-unit building known as Forest Ridge at 3420 The Collegeway in Mississauga.

Forest Ridge had a mix of tenants -- 70% paid rents according to their low income, and 30% paid rent at market rates. The idea behind it: to integrate tenants with varying incomes anonymously, make the project pay its way, and if a tenant's fortunes improved, he became a market rate tenant.

Pathway also arranged breakfast and lunch programs, a homework club, parenting workshops, and more. Such programs are now an integral part of Pathway-managed buildings via its sister company, Pathway Community Programs, and other service providers.

In 1994, again in partnership with the Region of Peel, Pathway accessed funding from the Federal and Ontario Governments and completed another building, the 98-unit Arbour Mill, at 3023 Parkerhill Road, Mississauga.

In 2000, Peel stepped away from its involvement with the day-to-day management of the buildings and Pathway hired a general manager with a staff of two superintendents, and an administrator. Pathway has a small surplus each year, keeps its buildings in excellent condition, has accessed various governmental support programs, has installed environmentally-friendly energy reduction systems, maintains about \$1 million in capital funds and keeps a low vacancy rate with minimal arrears.

Three representatives from each of the original faith congregations comprise Pathway's board of directors, setting guidelines, policies and procedures while overseeing operations.

Pathway formed a subsidiary company Pathway Housing and Support Services Inc. (PHSS) in 2012, which in 2014 became manager of a new 200-unit affordable housing building known as Norton Lake in Brampton, owned by the Region of Peel. PHSS now manages 240 units and is looking for more. Pathway now owns or manages 470 affordable housing units and is one of Peel's largest non-profit housing providers.

Little government money for housing has been available since the mid 1990s, but the Federal and Ontario governments are now setting aside funds. Pathway is thinking about a new affordable housing building in Peel.



Forest Ridge, 3420 The Collegeway, Mississauga



Arbour Mill, 3023 Parkerhill Road, Mississauga



Norton Lake, 1115 Queen Street East, Brampton

In sum, Pathway has become an excellent example of the strength of inter-faith cooperation, designed to achieve sustainable affordable housing goals.

For more information, check

Pathway's website:
www.pathwayhousing.ca

John Needham is President of Pathway Non-Profit Community Developments Inc. of Peel

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(Photo supplied by Peel Acorn)

ACORN PLANTING IN PEEL

Cooksville has a new organization.

It's ACORN Cooksville, and the folk shown here are attending its founding meeting at Cooksville United Church.

ACORN Canada, as stated on its website, believes "that social and economic justice can best be achieved with a national active membership who are invested in their organization and focused on building power for change."

It describes itself as an independent national organization of low and moderate income families with

102,000 members in nine cities across Canada. It established in Canada in 2004.

ACORN began in the U.S. as the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now and Wikipedia says it was once the largest organization working for social justice and stronger communities in the United States. Among other activities, it organized voter registration, but was accused of voter fraud. The U.S. ACORN fought off the allegations but disbanded in 2010, following loss of funding from government and private donors.

Beating the barriers

BY PAULA ANNE OLTHUIS

People with disabilities encounter barriers every day – barriers that can be less limiting if information is shared and people work together.

Connect 4 Life is a Mississauga charity that helps people with disabilities achieve independence. It shares information – and opportunity too. Workshops, seminars, hands-on training, help to scale barriers.

Here's one opportunity:

An Accessible Voice in Broadcasting. A first of its kind in Canada, this six-month Radio Broadcast Training course, designed for persons with disabilities, is an introduction to basic radio production.

Training modules include learning how to operate studio equipment and its theory, and how to use digital audio-editing software. Students are introduced to on-air presentations as well as news and sports writing and presentation with accessible content. Graduates can participate in an internship.

The first graduating class spent five days a week for 24 weeks of intense in-class study. Instructors and a teaching assistant collaborated in the classroom to replace barriers with opportunities. Then came internships. Melanie Taddeo Founder/Director of Connect 4 Life is facilitating Connect 4 Life classes.

a registered nurse for 15 years, and have worked at various health care settings. I had to shift my focus into health teaching and educating the public in surrounding communities.

I am a workshop facilitator for clients from the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, the Canadian Paraplegic Association, and the Spinal Cord Injury Association, and am part of the Ministry of Care team at New Life Covenant Centre, visiting homes for the aged and retirement residents as assigned. As one of the praise and worship song leaders, I enjoy all genres of music, singing, writing poetry and songwriting.

It is important to me to promote awareness, wellness, and education for the public and surrounding communities. It encounter every day.

Well, it started with an email....

The course was taught at the Broadcast Training Centre, in Port Credit. My instructor was Joe Snider.

Through Connect 4 Life I found that I could enhance my reading, writing and vocal abilities in broadcasting.

Now, I can combine my health teaching knowledge and broadcast training.

I am a health care professional,

Greetings to you all.

I am a client and volunteer with Connect 4 Life, founded and directed by Melanie Taddeo. She believed in me and encouraged me to take the "An Accessible Voice in Broadcasting" program. When I received the email, I was excited to give this a try and nervous at the same time to see if I could do this with the vision challenges that

I encounter every day.

Having an acquired disability changed my life, and has challenged me not to give up or listen to negativity, myths, or misconceptions, but to be a voice that needs to be heard.

Now, I can combine my health teaching knowledge and broadcast training.

There are perks: free Smart Serve and Safe Food Handling

Certificates; free uniforms and non-slip shoes; help with transportation, followed by coaching in getting a job.

The first eight weeks of training are in-kitchen, working one-on-one with a certified chef to develop the skills to work in a restaurant. Chef Burgi has over 30 years' experience and is a fantastic teacher.

It takes 16 weeks to prepare individuals for entry-level positions in food preparation, cooking, serving, clean-up.

From day one, classes focus on theoretical learning plus hands-on. Students learn knife skills, how to use industrial kitchen equipment, and cook a variety of foods.

The first graduating class spent



Whether it's main courses, salads, desserts, or cleaning the kitchen, young people taking the Culinary Training Program with the John Howard Society learn how to cook and how to get a job. (Photos supplied)

John Howard's recipe for success

BY ANNA SYCZ

Ever wondered if the culinary industry is for you, but you've never had a chance to test your skills? The John Howard Society in Peel has the answer.

It has partnered with Good Food Brampton to provide a Culinary Training Program for Youth.

It takes 16 weeks to prepare individuals for entry-level positions in food preparation, cooking, serving, clean-up.

From day one, classes focus on theoretical learning plus hands-on. Students learn knife skills, how to use industrial kitchen equipment, and cook a variety of foods.

At the same time, they learn how to develop a resume, take part in mock interviews, find the techniques of searching for jobs and finding a placement.

Next comes eight weeks in a paid placement, where we try to match you to a restaurant where you will excel in an entry-level position. We offer subsidized wages to get your foot in the door and offset the initial cost of your training.

After the placement period, the goal is for you to stay employed and begin your

Anna Sycz is Employer Relation Liaison for Peel-Halton-Dufferin John Howard Society.

Children need grief support too!

BY LINDA HOCHSTETLER

Death and dying of a loved one touches everyone in society, from the youngest to the oldest. Grieving these losses can be an exhausting and sometimes time consuming endeavor.

Often the people providing support are the same people impacted by the loss themselves. This is certainly often the case with children who are grieving the loss of loved ones. They need help from their parents who often are grieving themselves, and who aren't able to give them what they need.

Grieving children need age-appropriate support. They grieve differently to adults, and their grief may emerge differently as they age and grow through stages. They need someone to answer their questions about death. Sometimes these questions might come out in chunks and not all at once. Often they are the kind of questions that parents don't know how to answer, because they are about some of the great mysteries of life.

Young children struggle to put their grief into words. It is common to notice children struggling

by looking at their body language or watching them play. They may be fine one moment, and then crying the next moment.

Grief tends to happen in chunks for kids – like puddle jumping – and children often go from happy to crying to back to happy in a very short time period, and they need caring adults to let them do this and help them make sense of it all.

Bethell Hospice offers grief support groups for children in several locations. The groups are run by registered social workers and specially-trained volunteers.

There are no fees to attend any of the groups.

Group activities include art projects, writing exercises, and games. Simultaneous groups are offered for parents of the children at the same location. For more details go to www.bethellhospice.org.

Linda Hochstetler, MSW, RSW, is Social Worker, Education and Quality Lead at Bethell Hospice in Peel.

THE HIGH COST OF CHILDCARE

Women are generally not paid as much as men even when they do the same or comparable work.

Many women have childcare responsibilities as well as fulltime jobs.

The federal government's Study on the Economic Security of Women in Canada says lack of childcare has been cited as a barrier to women "achieving economic stability."

The government invites women, men, organizations, to submit briefs on women's place in the economy and

how childcare opportunities could be improved.

You can send a brief to the Standing Committee on the Status of Women until 5 p.m. on Monday, May 15, 2017.

You can send your ideas directly from the website below, and check out some of the 35 briefs and statements of 43 witnesses already submitted, including items from rape crisis centres, trade unions, university women's groups, DisAbled women, women's shelters, StatsCan, and more.

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/Committees/en/FEWO/StudyActivity?studyActivityId=9230590>

Sensible shoes – a life in nursing

Mississauga resident Norma Nicholson emigrated from Jamaica to become a nanny in a household of four children and their parents. The family encouraged her to volunteer in the community and helped her advance her education.

Volunteering at an acute care hospital led to a career in healthcare as she went from nanny to practical nurse, to a registered nurse with bachelor's and master's degrees.

She worked at a children's hospital for years, then moved into health

care management and education in acute care hospitals, long-term care and ambulatory rehabilitative services, finally into youth justice.

Though she has retired from nursing, Nicholson is still on the go. She is vice-chair of Peel Police Services Board and continues volunteer work.

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The real meaning of money

FINANCIAL LITERACY: UNDERSTANDING ITS RELEVANCE IN OUR LIVES

BY MARINA ROSAS

The key to understanding what it means to be financially literate is being able to relate to the actual meaning of money. Ask yourself: "What are my values, feelings and thoughts about money?"

Consider how it can improve your life and how your level of confidence and skills can help you establish goals to overcome financial hardship.

With over 222,000 people in the Region of Peel experiencing poverty and struggling to live each and every day, many are in need of affordable housing, emergency shelter, food, and financial security.

To overcome this, people are encouraged to build on their independence and the best way is to know what your options are to gain financial security and establish a means to obtain money.

Money: does it mean power, time, wealth...?

Does it mean everything to you, or nothing at all?

The world revolves around money and it's your job to discover how you can have access to it and wisely manage it. Let's look at one very important aspect: what possible income is at your fingertips and what programs and benefits are there to support it?

Income, benefits and tax credits

As a Settlement/Employment Counsellor, I often tell my clients to set SMART goals in their job search. And to set goals relating to money.

You can help yourself gain income through employment readiness and access to government income!

Employment readiness: Are you employable? What skills do you have? Do you have an education? If not, get ready to work! Look for programs in the Region of Peel to facilitate your job search and enable you to stay in a job, such as programs offering skills-matching and career decision services, work skills improvement, language training, adult learning with in-class training and practicum placements, as well as volunteering.

If you're thinking of going back to school, some programs provide grants, bursaries and scholarships, or financial assistance through loans. Some programs can only be accessed while on social assistance. Explore your options, ask questions and seek appropriate assistance.

Government Income: Access to Ontario government benefits is also a way to obtain money, so you must stay current with filing your taxes, allowing the Canada Revenue Agency to calculate your benefits and tax returns based on income and expenses reported each year. Once filed, money can be collected by claiming a number of credits and benefits, including income tax credits and support for parents, students and seniors, among others.

mon·ey

/'mənē/

noun

A current medium of exchange in the form of coins and banknotes; coins and banknotes collectively.

Possible benefits include:

Working Income Tax Benefit (WITB): a refundable tax credit for individuals and families with low income;

GST/ HST Credit: Tax-free quarterly payment that helps families and individuals with low or modest income offset all or part of the GST or HST they have paid;

Retirement income: Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement: You may get a monthly benefit when you reach age 65 or receive supplemental income if you have a low retirement income;

Canada Pension Plan provides a monthly benefit to people who have contributed during their working lives;

Registered Retirement Savings Plan: holds savings and investment assets for retirement by employees

and self-employed people.

Childcare Financial Support: government subsidies and grants to help pay for child care or to support children with special needs. Some benefits include Ontario Childcare Subsidy, Ontario Child Benefit, Ontario Child Care Supplement, Universal Child Care Benefit and Canada Child Tax Benefit.

Ontario Disability Support Program: if you have a disability, you may be eligible for this program; it assists you and your family with essential living expenses, from prescription drugs, to vision care, job search and retention and career advancement.

Many more benefits are available to cover the needs and circumstances of individuals and families across the Region of Peel and all across Ontario. To get a better idea of the benefits and tax credits you may qualify for, visit www.canadabenefits.gc.ca and www.ontario.ca/page/tax-credit-calculator to complete questionnaires and receive a customized list of benefits you may be eligible for or an estimate on how much money you could receive when filing your tax return.

To help out with the costs of filing your taxes, Chartered Professional Accountants Ontario, in partnership with community agencies, also holds free tax clinics every year during the tax filing season through the Tax Preparation Assistance Program. This program allows for volunteer Chartered Professional Accountants to prepare personal tax returns for low-income individuals and families all across Ontario. For more information, visit <http://www.cpaontario.ca/Public/TaxPrepAssistanceProgram/1007page1057.aspx>.

The bottom line to Financial Literacy is to explore your options, plan ahead and make decisions that will benefit your financial well-being in the future. Just be aware that you don't have to do it alone. Help is available.

Marina Rosas is a settlement/employment counsellor with Peel Career Assessment Services Inc. in Mississauga. Phone (905) 670-1967 or email marina@peelcareer.com



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"UNFOUNDED" DISMISSAL OF SEX ASSAULT CLAIMS

10,000 and Counting...

10,000 and Counting..." was on the front page of the *Globe and Mail* one Saturday in February. That is the number of "unfounded" sexual assault cases that police organizations across Canada have vowed to review in the wake of a *Globe* exposé.

In a 20-month investigation into police-reported sexual assault allegations, the *Globe* revealed how police services across the country record some sexual assault cases as "unfounded" – a formal police classification that means "a crime was neither attempted, nor occurred".

Not occurred -- meaning the victim is lying.

The statistics on sexual assault are sobering. According to the Canadian Women's Foundation, one in every 17 women in Canada is raped at some point in her life. A woman is sexually assaulted by forced intercourse every 17 minutes. 70% of rapes are committed by someone the victim knows, and half of all rapes occur on dates.

"Unfounded" sexual assault reports are high in many Ontario regions. Ontario Provincial Police dropped 30% of sexual assault allegations as unfounded between 2010 and 2014. Peel Region deemed 25% of reported sexual assaults as unfounded, whereas, Windsor and Toronto found just 3% and 7% of the reports as unfounded.

Why are Peel Regional Police deciding that 25% of reports of sexual assault are wrong -- that no crime was attempted?

It seems what is occurring is what most survivor-victims and their advocates fear: that complainants who do not conform to stereotypes about "the perfect victim" are not believed by the police and the report is deemed "unfounded".

This verifies what many advocates and crisis workers supporting sexual assault survivors already know: Too many sexual assaults that are reported do not result in charges, and too many assaults categorized as unfounded construct survivors as unreliable or untruthful.

The truth is, when sexual assault allegations are dismissed with such frequency it is a sign of a deeper flaw in the investigation process: inadequate training of police officers; interviewing

techniques that do not take into consideration the effects that trauma can have on memory; and the persistence of rape myths among law enforcement officials.

What is true is that false allegations of sexual assaults are not a common problem, but what is a common social problem is that survivor-victims are not believed or supported when they share their experiences.

In fact, most reports of sexual assault do not lead to charges, let alone convictions. According to the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres, in Canada, out of every 1,000 sexual assaults, 997 assailants walk free, 33 are reported to the police, 29 are reported as a crime, 12 see charges laid, six are prosecuted, and three lead to a conviction. This sheds light on the enormous barriers that survivor-victims face.

Many of our local sexual violence survivor advocates have observed that, too often, systems meant to support victims disbelieve them, work to discredit them, or see them somehow as complicit to the violation.

The reaction to the *Globe and Mail* investigation has been interesting. At last count, nearly 35 police forces serving more than 1,000 communities have launched investigations into the "unfounded" cases, according to the *Globe*.

Mississauga Mayor Bonnie Crombie immediately after reading the exposé contacted the Peel Police Services Board Chair, Amrik Ahluwalia requesting that the Police Services Board "undertake a comprehensive review of all non-investigated sexual assaults in Peel." During the last Peel Police Services Board meeting, I saw Police Chief Evans spend a total of 15 seconds at the beginning of the meeting to say that there would be an INTERNAL REVIEW of the 25% unfounded cases by Peel Police from 2010-2014. But, in unfounded sexual assault cases, an internal police review is not enough.

Internal reviews are not transparent, accountable, or open to long term and sustainable change of the policing and justice system for sexual assault survivor-victims.

Only a practice known as the "Philadelphia model," tried and tested for years to the praise of both police

and women's advocates, holds the potential for real and sustainable change. The Philadelphia model requires long term partnerships between police and sexual assault advocates. where they work together to review all unfounded cases and randomly ask questions, identify investigative failures or when there is a possible distortion by myth and stereotypical influences.

When such reviews are conducted by all parties frequently, police can re-open files, complete investigations and lay charges. Both police and advocates learn from each other's expertise. The Philadelphia Model has produced dramatic results in Philadelphia and other U.S. cities, resulting in lower unfounded rates, more sophisticated investigations, more charges, better prepared prosecutors, and increased public awareness and confidence in the police.

Police across Canada argue that privacy laws prevent them from adopting a Philadelphia model. But is this a valid concern? While privacy laws do prevent government from disclosing personal information through Access to Information Requests, the Philadelphia model does not require access to information. Participants in the review of files would be bound by confidentiality agreements. Confidentiality could be

used as a red herring to deflect transparency and oversight of the police.

In addition, many other recommendations are being made to the police services and criminal justice systems:

- Improve accountability in the police services processes for responding to sexual assault complaints;
- Improve sexual assault training for police, implement interviewing techniques and procedures that consider the effect that trauma has on memory, and conduct educational training that focuses on the challenge and persistence of sexual violence myths among all law enforcement officials.

At the March meeting of Peel Police Services Board, Paula Lam of Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse (PCAWA) urged a review of all of Peel's "unfounded" cases, using the Philadelphia model, plus other recommendations. The Board was "receptive to dialogue about an external review. I will be following up with them to ensure we actually meet and they move forward on what they promised they would do," Lam said.

Michelle Bilek is a member of Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse

Community Kitchen, cont. from p.1



Left: Mayor Bonnie says...
"A community kitchen is a great idea... but sad that we should need it."
– Mississauga Mayor Bonnie Crombie



Right: Dipika Damerla, MPP for Mississauga East-Cooksville and Minister of Seniors Affairs, called activists together to start a community kitchen in Mississauga. (Photo supplied)

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Reading your way to mental health

BY LAURA BILYEA

Mental Health is not something that just affects “some” people.

Just as every one of us has to deal with catching the flu, or to learn how to handle hereditary illnesses and natural aging, mental health is part of whole-body health for every person. If you (or someone you care about) becomes mentally ill, treatment is necessary.

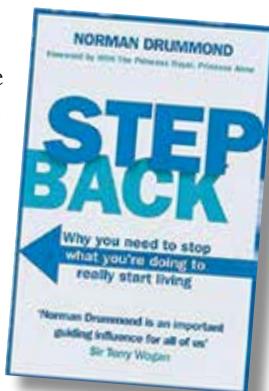
Just as there are preventive measures you can take to ensure a healthy body, there are ways to safeguard a healthy mind. Here are some books from Mississauga’s libraries that can help you manage your mental health.

FOR METHODS AND EXERCISES FOR YOUR BRAIN:

Step Back: Why You Need to Stop What You're Doing to Start Living

By Norman Drummond

We can't hope to achieve our potential unless we take time out to work out what is most important to us. Drummond focuses on the rich rewards of stepping back: clarity of thought, stronger objectives - and the ability to discern the true priorities of your heart.



Brampton's Newcomer Bus Tour partnership collects awards at every stop. Latest prize is \$2,000 from the American Public Library Association's **Up-start Innovation Award** for the Library's role in welcoming newcomers. The Newcomer Bus Tour takes place in partnership with the City of Brampton and Brampton Transit, along a route that includes Brampton Library branches and other city highlights. Along the way, staff describe the many benefits of Library membership, including free programs and services for all ages and interests.

In 2015, the tour won the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport's **Angus Mowat Award for Excellence in Public Library Service**.

(Photo supplied)

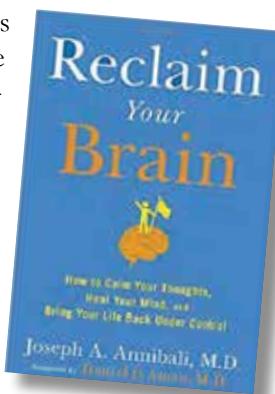
ToughTomes

BY LAURA BILYEA, Librarian
Central Library, Mississauga

Reclaim your Brain: how to calm your thoughts, heal your mind and bring your life back under control

By Joseph Annibali, M.D.

Dr. Joseph Annibali has treated thousands of people with overloaded, overstimulated brains. Whether they are diagnosed with anxiety, disabling OCD, depression, bipolar disorder, or even substance abuse, Annibali's approach is to address the Too-Busy Brain, a great irritant that interferes with attention, concentration, focus, mood, and often much more. Through practical strategies, understandable explanations, and prescriptive mind-management techniques, Dr. Annibali helps readers get back in control of their lives.

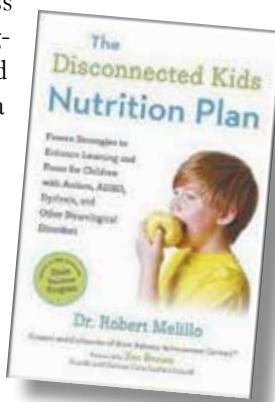


FOR HEALTHY EATING PRACTICES AND MANAGING CHILDREN WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES:

The disconnected kids nutrition plan: proven strategies to enhance learning and focus for children with autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and other neurological disorders

By Robert Melillo, M.D.

Dr. Robert Melillo's Brain Balance program has helped thousands of families across the country, offering a drug-free, scientifically-based method for addressing a wide range of conditions, including autism spectrum disorders and ADHD. He presents the nutritional side of the Brain Balance Program, featuring guidelines, tips, and kid-friendly recipes based on the latest scientific research on how food affects the brain.



FOR INSPIRATION:

Champion for health: how Clara Hughes fought depression to win Olympic gold

By Richard Brignall

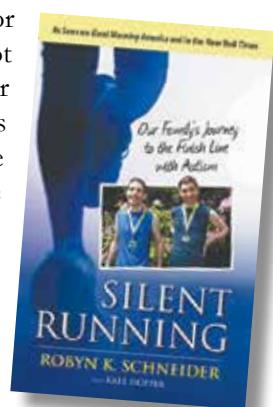
Clara Hughes pushed through pain to get to the finish line, trying to have her best race every day but few knew that the same determination and focus were also needed to fight her own personal battles. Clara's inspiring story does not end with winning gold. She has become a symbol of the fight to remove the stigma from mental illness by cycling thousands of kilometres in all kinds of weather to raise awareness. Clara is a remarkable athlete, but it is her strength and courage off the track that have made her a true champion.



Silent running: our family's journey to the finish line with autism

By Robyn Schneider

Running is a way of life for the Schneider family, but not in the same way as it is for most runners. Twin brothers Alex and Jamie Schneider are severely autistic yet they have run almost 150 races, including six marathons. Their father Allan successfully manages his symptoms of multiple sclerosis with vitamins and miles of jogging on the trails near their Long Island home. Their mother Robyn, while undergoing chemotherapy for breast cancer six years ago, decided to run her way to recovery. In *Silent Running*, Robyn Schneider shares her family's incredible story of triumph in the face of enormous hurdles, and of the shared passion that has fuelled their fight.



Look for these books and more at your local library.

Laura Bilyea is a librarian at Mississauga Central Library

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- support children with special needs

Fee subsidy is available to parents and caregivers of children 0-12 years who need help to pay for licensed child care in Peel.

For more information about licensed child care options, the child care fee subsidy or special needs resources in licensed child care, call [905-791-7800](tel:905-791-7800) or visit peelregion.ca/children.



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